

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant notes that Claims 1 and 7-46 are pending. The indication of the pending claims as 1-5 and 7-46 in the outstanding Office Action is evidently mistaken.

All pending claims stand rejected solely under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for alleged omission of essential structural cooperative relationships of elements, specifically: "the function of said field effect transistors not being used in logic performances [sic, performance?] in relation to those logic cells." Office Action at page 2.

Applicant would note initially that the asserted rationale for the rejection appears to be unrelated to Claims 33-38, which involve the feature that the switch elements include field effect transistors not used for an input circuit among the field effect transistors for input/output circuits. Note the final paragraph in each of independent Claims 33 and 34. Accordingly, at least insofar as applied to Claims 33-38, the rejection is unfounded and should be withdrawn.

As to the remaining claims, while the previously presented language is believed to have been sufficiently clear, the independent claims have been further amended to clarify the purpose of the switch elements in an effort to address the Examiner's concerns. In particular, independent Claims 1 and 7-14 have been amended to recite that the switch elements are provided between the semiconductor region and the power supply wirings to control voltage applied to the semiconductor region. Independent Claims 28-32 have been amended to recite that the first switch elements are provided between the first semiconductor region and the first power supply wiring to control voltage applied to the first semiconductor region, and further that the second switch elements are provided between the second semiconductor region and the second power supply wiring to control voltage applied to the second semiconductor region. Independent Claims 39-41 have been amended to emphasize that the switch elements are arranged for electrically connecting and disconnecting a semiconductor region to and from a power supply wiring. Finally, independent Claim 42 has been amended to recite that the switch element's field effect transistor is provided

between a power supply wiring and a semiconductor region to control voltage applied to the semiconductor region.

It is readily evident that the function of controlling voltage applied to the semiconductor region is distinct from the performance of a logic operation. For example, referring to Fig. 4, the switching transistors 3SW1 and 3SW2 control voltages applied to the n-WELL and p-WELL of the pMIS and nMIS transistors, respectively. Transistors 3SW1 and 3SW2 are not used to perform the inverter logic AND logic functions, which are performed by other cells specifically configured for those purposes.

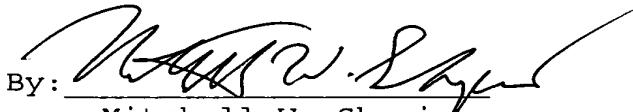
It will therefore be appreciated that, at least as presently amended, the claims are complete, and in full compliance with § 112, second paragraph.

Accordingly, it is respectfully urged that the outstanding rejection be withdrawn and this application now be passed to issue.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is

required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully requested,

By: 

MWS:sjk

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